



State of North Carolina
Office of the Governor

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GOV. EASLEY CORRECTS MISLEADING EPA RELEASE
Southern Governors' Have Not Expressed Support For Clear Skies

RALEIGH - Gov. Mike Easley today sent a letter to Ms. Marianne Lamont Horinko, Acting Administrator for the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), correcting an Aug. 4 release by the EPA. The EPA release implied that the Southern Governors' Association supported the Clear Skies Initiative.

In fact, the Southern Governors' Association has not taken a position on the Clear Skies Initiative. In May of 2002, following a Governor's Air Summit hosted by Gov. Easley, a letter was sent by the participating Governors (N.C., S.C., Ga. and Tenn.) to President Bush. The letter expressed a need for a multi-pollutant strategy to reduce the emissions of sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxide and mercury particularly from electric utility plants. In addition, in a subsequent letter to then EPA Administrator Christine Whitman, Gov. Easley expressed several concerns regarding the Clear Skies Initiative proposed by the Bush Administration.

"There is no question that we need a strong, national multi-pollutant strategy to reduce the emissions of sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxide and mercury in our air," said Easley. "But it is misleading to imply that North Carolina supports this plan. In fact, I have several concerns about it.

"In order for Clear Skies legislation to have value for North Carolina citizens, it must ensure pollution reductions from our neighbors," said Easley. "Through Clean Smokestacks, North Carolina has done its part to improve the quality of its air. We have gone beyond what is required by federal law. But we cannot go it alone."

Specifically, Easley expressed concerns about the amount of time that Clear Skies would take to be fully implemented (North Carolina's Clean Smokestacks plan will accomplish these same goals in half the amount of time); the cap-and-trade remedy under Clear Skies may achieve reductions on a national scale, it may also provide no relief at all in locations where paper credits are used in lieu of real controls; and the Clear Skies legislation, as currently proposed, would severely restrict the states' ability to seek pollution reductions from upwind sources in other states through sections 126 and 110(a) of the Clean Air Act.

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